

A METHOD FOR ON-LINE CALIBRATION OF LOW ACCURACY  
VOLTAGE SENSOR THROUGH COMMUNICATION BUS

DESCRIPTION

The present invention relates to a method for on-line calibration of low accuracy  
5 voltage sensors through a communication bus. The method of the present  
invention is particularly useful for calibration of voltage sensors and  
consequently for voltage measurements in primary and/or secondary distribution  
electrical sub-stations.

Present solution in primary distribution for voltage measure is well known and is  
10 schematically reported in the diagram of figure 1. Voltage measure is usually an  
optional feature, integrated in the bay panel when required by means of standard  
voltage transformer or voltage sensors. Voltage measurement is normally  
required for busbar voltage measure on both sides of the circuit breaker and  
incoming feeders.

15 Voltage from the secondary winding of the voltage transformer is wired to the  
analog input of a suitable electronic device to implement the necessary  
protection, control and metering functions.

Present solutions needs high power voltage transformers in order to supply the  
information to a high number of devices. This involves also a lot of inter-panel  
20 cabling to bring the required information to all the devices.

Voltage measurement is therefore generally carried out when it is aimed at  
protection functions at a switchboard level, i.e. for under-voltage or over-voltage  
protection. Using expensive equipments and complicated cabling is much less  
reasonable and affordable when the voltage information is required for  
25 protection functions at a feeder level, such as, for example, for all directional  
current protection.

Goal of the invention is the definition of a system architecture allowing for  
supplying a single circuit breaker electronic device with reliable and accurate  
voltage measurement.

The definition of such a system architecture consists in the choice of the necessary hardware equipment to implement a calibration procedure, in order to achieve a low cost, high accuracy measure on each load side of a circuit breaker.

5 The system architecture according to the present invention, consists therefore in the proper choice of communication media, electronic devices and voltage sensors, as well as a proper voltage transformers architecture.

In the system according to the present invention, the voltage sensors are directly wired to an electronic device on-board the circuit breaker for better reliability and for sustaining high dynamics of voltage-based protection functions.

10 When the voltage measurement is located on the load side of a circuit breaker equipped with a proper electronic device, it is possible to achieve a high accuracy by implementing an on-line calibration procedure. The method for on-line calibration according to the present invention is based on the availability of a high accuracy and stability voltage transformer on the busbar. The voltage  
15 information coming therefrom is communicated to all the electronic devices which are on-board the circuit breakers or present in the switchboard, so as to calibrate the local low accuracy capacitive voltage sensor.

The system architecture and the method according to the present invention have several advantages.

- 20 - The requirements on the communication are lowered, as the calibration can be made on-line but the information needs to be sent out with a low frequency, i.e. with a minimum time scale. Also, the dynamic has to be higher of the system thermal dynamic only.
- It enables the reliability of wired connection of the integrated sensor to the  
25 electronic device for protection; at the same time, the accuracy is comparable to a voltage transformer at the basic cost.
- The limits of capacitive sensor technology, where a high accuracy is difficult to achieve due to value variation of the capacitance within the operating thermal range, are solved. By calibrating the sensor voltage output with the

busbar voltage high accuracy measurement, the temperature dependence is no longer an issue.

- It will enable to reduce the cost of capacitive sensors by choosing a low voltage side capacitor for the divider with low cost and accuracy, as accuracy is provided by the calibration procedure.

The system architecture and the method according to the present invention are now described with reference to figure 2.

Referring to fig. 2, the voltage transformer, designated with reference numeral 1, on the busbar is connected to an Intelligent Process Unit. In figure 2 the Intelligent Process Unit is identified as an electronic device ED, in all similar to the electronic device on-board the circuit breaker. Through this specific electronic device, the voltage measure is available to all the electronic devices present on the communication bus. The need to transfer the full information, i.e. the data samples, or a processed information, such as module and/or phase, in a continuous manner would impose high requirements on the bus transmission capability. At the same time, if the information is used for protection function, a high dynamic of the order of milliseconds and a high reliability of the information bus are mandatory.

Low cost, low accuracy, i.e. 3% or worse, capacitive sensors are also present and are designated with reference numeral 2 and 3. As the voltage measure is available on each circuit breaker load side through such low cost, low accuracy capacitive sensors, it is possible to directly wire the information to each electronic device, assuring a higher reliability of the local feeder protection functions.

In order to achieve a higher accuracy, the calibration of the sensor output is performed on-line but the information from the voltage transformer is needed only at long intervals, the dynamic required being comparable with the thermal behavior of the system to avoid the temperature dependency of the sensor.

It is therefore possible, using the system architecture and the method according

to the present invention, to achieve a reliable measurement of the voltage by using voltage sensors having a relatively low accuracy and a relatively low cost.